



MARCH 1999

Louisiana COAST LINES

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Coast 2050 Plan Approved

Louisiana's new coastal ecosystem management plan, resulting from 18 months of deliberation and cooperation between federal, state, and local governments, academia, and the general public was unanimously approved by the state's Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Authority and the federal Coastal Wetlands, Planning, Protection and Restoration Act Task Force at a joint meeting on October 20, 1998. The Coast 2050 plan, entitled "Coast 2050: Toward a Sustainable Coastal Louisiana" was finalized by the December 22, 1998 deadline. Along with the approval of the Coast 2050 plan, a written resolution of support was also received from each of the twenty (20) parish governments involved for the portions of the plan which were pertinent to their areas.

It is old news that Louisiana is losing between 25 and 35 square miles of coastal wetlands every year. It is also well known that there have been numerous efforts in the past to reduce or eliminate coastal wetland loss in Louisiana, none of which have been comprehensive enough, nor received a broad enough base of support, to address an environmental disaster of this magnitude. What the Coast 2050 planning effort has done is to contrast the status quo (i.e., look at existing

restoration efforts in place, but no additional ones) with what the Louisianians would prefer the coast to look like in the future. The difference between the projected outlook of the Louisiana coastline in the year 2050, and the desired outlook, became the basis for developing objectives for each region of the coastal zone for this planning initiative. Once the regional objectives were identified, they became the building blocks for the development of the Coast 2050 "regional strategies."

Since the magnitude of the problems facing coastal wetland loss in Louisiana is monumental, the solutions also need to be monumental. Regional strategies include large-scale river diversions, maintenance of the integrity of major shorelines, barrier island restoration and maintenance, and restoration of natural watershed drainage patterns. These regional strategies were selected to address not only wetland needs, but were chosen with an eye toward their long-term benefits to other coastal concerns such as communities, transportation/navigation infrastructure, and fisheries production. With the level of marsh loss prevention envisioned, Louisiana's contribution to the nation by virtue of

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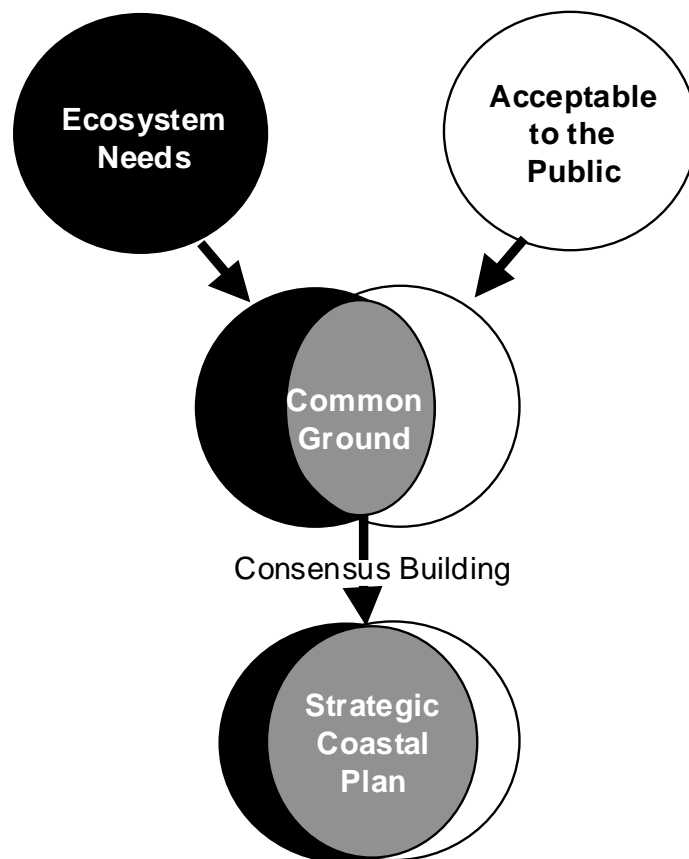


continued oil and gas supply, fisheries production, navigation, agriculture, and prime wildlife habitat will also be sustainable.

Implementation of the plan will result from the collective effort of the Breaux Act Task Force and the State Wetlands Authority, with the Department of Natural Resources acting as local sponsor in most cases. It was developed in partnership with the public, parish governments, and state and federal agencies, is based on technically sound strategies designed to sustain coastal resources, and is an overall template which will provide guidance for the development and implementation of coastal restoration projects. The Coast 2050 plan

represents Louisiana's vision for its coast in the year 2050, and provides a comprehensive strategic plan for achieving that goal. Once implemented, it will provide Louisianans with the tools to approach "no net loss" of coastal wetlands by the year 2050.

The "Coast 2050: Toward a Sustainable Coastal Louisiana" document will soon be available on the CRD web site located at www.saveLAwetlands.org. For additional information, contact the Coastal Restoration Division at (225) 342-7308, or visit the CWPPRA website at www.lacoast.org.



Coast 2050 Development Process



Special Notice From the Department of Natural Resources



The Department of Natural Resources would like to take this opportunity to inform parties involved with either mineral or oyster leasing activities about the formation of the Oyster Lease Damage Evaluation Board (Board). The Board was created to arbitrate conflicts between mineral owners and oyster leaseholders "to effect an equitable solution ... which will result in fair and predictable treatment to the oil and gas industry while assuring the oyster fishermen actual compensation for damages to their oyster beds due to mineral activities" (LA. R.S. 56:700.10).

The Board is composed of five (5) members including one nominated member each from the Louisiana Oyster Growers and Dealers Association and the Louisiana Oyster Task Force, and two members nominated jointly by the Louisiana Independent Oil and Gas Association, the Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association, and the Louisiana Landowners Association. The fifth member is selected by the other four members and is a practicing administrative law judge. Administration of the Board entails certifying biologists to conduct oyster lease surveys on

leases pending arbitration. Compensation for damages to oyster leases will be determined by the Board using uniform evaluation criteria based on the biological survey data both before and after project completion.

By law, the arbitration process may begin with a preliminary request for arbitration submitted by either the mineral owner or leaseholder, and in no case shall the process extend beyond ninety (90) days once the mineral project is completed and a final request for arbitration has been received by the Board. Submitting a case into arbitration does not forfeit either party's right to seek a judicial resolution; however, the existence and purpose of the Board is to expedite the claims process for the common benefit of both industries.

For more information about the Oyster Lease Damage Evaluation Board and the arbitration process, please contact Mr. John Waitz, Department of Natural Resources Legal Division, P.O. Box 94396, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9396, (225) 342-2614.



DNR's Website Takes on New Global Look

The state Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) information exchange on the World Wide Web is now better than ever. Beginning February 8, 1999 web users and DNR's many constituents including business and industry, teachers and students, and energy consumers found a new global look and enhanced design at www.dnr.state.la.us.

DNR Secretary Jack Caldwell said the department's technology and information experts have taken the homepage to a higher level of accessibility and ease for Louisianians and citizens across the globe. The new design features a quick view of contents within the site, and makes navigation among the hundreds of pages easier. A search engine has prominence on the front page.

Other special enhancements of the site are user friendly design techniques, modern colors, and special graphics. Featured are the department's major offices including Conservation, Coastal Restoration and Management, Energy, Mineral Resources, and the Atchafalaya Basin Program. Additionally, the state's Energy Policy and over twenty energy publications have gone on-line for viewing or downloading from the Internet.

DNR first launched its web site in November 1995 and after three years operating, added a 21st century information system known as SONRIS/2000.

SONRIS

DNR IS UNDERGOING A PROJECT TO RE-ENGINEER AND REDESIGN ITS INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR ALL OFFICES OF THE DEPARTMENT. SPECIFICALLY, DNR IS CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIC ONLINE NATURAL RESOURCES INFORMATION SYSTEM, SONRIS/2000 (PRONOUNCED "SUNRISE 2000"). ALL ENTERPRISE DATA IS STORED IN ONE DATABASE, BUILT AROUND THE ORACLE RELATIONAL DATABASE ENGINE, WAREHOUSING TEXTUAL DATA, GIS DATA, AND ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT IMAGES. SONRIS WAS ENVISIONED BY DNR TO BE AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO CONSERVING THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF LOUISIANA, BY USING ALLIANCES WITH HIGH-TECHNOLOGY ORGANIZATIONS TO IMPLEMENT A 21ST CENTURY, STATE-OF-THE-ART INFORMATION SYSTEM. THIS VISION IS BEING FULFILLED, ON THE SUNRISE OF THE YEAR 2000, AS DNR PROUDLY UNVEILS SONRIS/2000.



CMD Releases Wetlands CD Rom

Thanks to a partnership between state and federal agencies, Louisiana has one more weapon in its arsenal to battle wetland loss—a multimedia CD-ROM that teachers can use to inform students of the importance of these natural resources.

“Louisiana Wetlands Functions and Values” features educational videos, an interactive quiz, lively graphics, and sounds of the wetlands. The CD tells the story of why wetlands are important, how they work, causes of their loss and hope for their restoration. It also contains information about the Wetlands Reserve Program, and wetland conservation opportunities statewide. The target audience is sixth through 12th grades but interested adults would also find the CD useful.

This educational tool was developed by the U.S. Geological Survey’s National Wetlands Research Center in Lafayette, La., from materials provided by the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources’ Coastal Management Division and the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center’s Cooperative Extension Service.

Dr. Robert E. Stewart, center director, said, “We have been studying wetlands, their functions and values, and their dramatic loss of 25 to 35 square miles a year in Louisiana for several decades. And I am convinced that only a public educated in the issues can make a difference in the future management of these wetlands. What better way to do this than to team up with state agencies and use the latest technology to bring this issue to Louisiana school children?”

Louisiana Department of Natural Resources Secretary Jack Caldwell said, “We are delighted to

work as partners with the USGS National Wetlands Research Center and with LSU on this project. Anytime we can help our children learn more about Louisiana’s valuable coast and the dramatic land loss that is taking place, we are doing a great service. Increased awareness on all levels will ultimately make the difference in the future of this national treasure.”

The CD will be distributed to teachers and others in education-related fields. Primary distribution will be through educational functions, such as science teacher’s conventions and environmental meetings and workshops. Through wide distribution of this CD-ROM teachers across the whole state of Louisiana may be made aware of the enormity of Louisiana’s wetland losses. Copies may also be obtained by educators by calling the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources at 1-800-267-4019 or through the Internet at www.LaCoast.gov and clicking on “Outreach/Education,” then “Free Stuff.”

For additional information about wetlands, consult the following web sites: www.LaCoast.gov, www.saveLAwetlands.org, www.nwrc.gov, and www.agctr.lsu.edu or call DNR at 1-800-267-4019 or LSU Agricultural Extension Service at 225-388-2266. The functions and values CD is the first in a series of three CD-ROMs being produced by the National Wetlands Research Center’s Electronics Technology Development Team. Others soon to be released are “Black Bears and Song Birds in the Mississippi River Valley” and “Explore Coastal Louisiana. For more information, contact Scott Wilson at 318-266-8644 or scott_wilson@usgs.gov.



NOAA Places Spectacular Satellite Images Of Hurricane Georges on Line

Spectacular satellite images of Hurricane Georges, including a color montage that shows Georges' progression from Sept. 18 through Sept. 28, are available on the World Wide Web, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced.

The images are from the following NOAA satellites: GOES-8, NOAA-12, and NOAA-14. Special color

composites from GOES-8 show Georges as it tracked over the Atlantic and into the Gulf of Mexico. The site also contains a GOES infrared MPEG movie.

The site can be found at: <http://www.osei.noaa.gov/georges.html>

Participate in Coastal Zone 99 (CZ99)

Program and registration information is now available for the upcoming CZ99 conference to be held at the Town & Country Resort in San Diego, California from July 24 through 30, 1999. This year's conference is entitled *The People, the Coast, the Ocean – Vision 2000* and will explore issues related to coastal management and planning, engineering and technology, public participation, dispute resolution, and program and policy evaluation – to name a few. Don't miss this opportunity to help create a new vision for the coast. Contact the Coastal Zone Secretariat at (617) 287-5577 or cz99@gemini.cc.umb.edu, or visit their website <http://omega.cc.umb.edu/cz99> for information.

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